

REMARKS

Claims 1-31 are currently pending in the application. Claims 1-31 were rejected. Claims 1, 4, 5, 7, 11, 17, 20, 21, 23, 27 and 31 have been amended. Claims 2, 3, 18, 19 and 28 have been canceled without prejudice.

The Examiner rejected claims 1-31 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,057,856 (Miyashita). Claims 1, 11, 17, 27 and 31 have been amended and the rejection is believed overcome thereby.

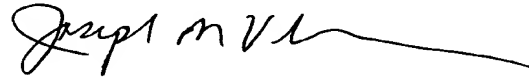
Specifically, each of these independent claims has been amended to recite that the users interact with each other “by chatting such that a message is displayed within the graphical spatial context in proximity of the proxy associated with the user generating the message.” These limitations were originally presented, for example, in claims 2 and 3 which have been canceled. Contrary to the Examiner’s assertion on page 3 of the Office Action, Miyashita does not teach or suggest such a limitation. That is, the primary mechanism for chatting between avatars described in Miyashita is the conventional text chat interface shown in Fig. 29. As briefly described in column 31, lines 37-47, of Miyashita, “multi-user window 202 is opened to the right side of the main window 201” in which the virtual reality world is displayed. Miyashita does not teach or suggest displaying chat text or any other form of message “within the graphical spatial context in proximity of the proxy.” Thus, Miyashita cannot be said to anticipate the invention as now claimed.

In view of the foregoing, the rejection of each of the independent claims as being anticipated by Miyashita is believed overcome. The rejection of all claims dependent on these independent claims is also believed overcome for at least the reasons discussed.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is

respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at (510) 843-6200.

Respectfully submitted,
BEYER WEAVER & THOMAS, LLP

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph M. Villeneuve", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

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